Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1599 - April 4, 2008 -Updated

(Includes full text of Utah rescue story)

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1599 with a release date of Friday, April 4tht, 2008 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a QST. KiwiSAT goes green, unlicensed devices play havoc with U-K repeaters, some good news on the ham radio numbers front and we ask how far you will drive to a hamfest if gasoline climbs to $4 a gallon or more. Find out how to answer the question on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1599 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: NZ KIWISAT TO BE HAM RADIO ENVIRO-BIRD

The planned New Zealand KiwiSAT ham radio satellite will also be a ham radio environmental research bird as well. Amateur Radio Newsline's Jim Meachen, ZL2BHF, is in Auckland with more:

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Late word from AMSAT New Zealand is that the KiwiSAT ham radio satellite will now carry an additional special beacon available for use by radio amateurs around the world. This, to collect data on atmospheric aberrations and to assist with information collection directly associated with global warming concerns and carbon balance monitoring.

Details have yet to be finalized however the KiwiSAT structure has been modified to incorporate a second 70cm monopole antenna and a high level of filtering has been incorporated to minimize any desensitizing of the on-board 70 centimeter receivers. Once in space, the beacon will be switched as required but will normally be "on" for a given whole orbit to provide for data collection

Meantime, the KiwiSAT linear flight transponder is currently transmitting from the Whangaparaoa area with beam antennas pointing South. This transponder is inverting type to compensate for Doppler shift when in orbit. Its transmit Power is 2 Watts PEP. Its uplink is Uplink is from 435.265 to 435.235 MHz on lower sideband and the downlink 145.850 to 145.880 MHz on upper sideband. The inverting transponder is used to correct for Doppler shift.

Reporting from Auckland, I'm Jim Meachen, ZL2BHF, for the Amateur Radio Newsline.

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KiwiSAT is currently planned for launch in mid to late 2009. Its planners say that KiwSAT is designed for low duty cycle modes and the use of FM wile not outright banned will be discouraged. Further information is on-line at www.kiwisat.org and we will have more ham radio space related items later

on in this weeks news. (AMSAT ZL)

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RADIO RULES: LEGAL UNLICENSED TRANSMITTERS HARMING UK REPEATER OPERATIONS

Unlicensed low power devices are creating a problem for some UHF repeater operations in the U-K. And its all quite legal. Jeramy Boot, G4NJH, explains:

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A concern to both the amateur radio services and the MoD is the growing proliferation of Short Range Devices (SRDs) that are operating in the 70 cm band and raising the noise floor. A recent trial that used 433MHz channels as inputs for D-Star equipment tests proved to be unsuccessful due to the high noise floor.

According to an EU Directive the official SRD sub-band within 70cms is 433.05-434.79MHz using a maximum of 10mW ERP. This includes handheld Low Power Devices (LPDs) permitted to use FM voice on channels that include a number of repeater inputs.

I'm Jeramy Boot, G4NJH, and you are listening to the Amateur Radio Newsline.

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What if anything can be done by U-K hams to elevate this situation is, at airtime, unknown. (Adapted from GB2RS story)

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RADIO POLITICS: RSGB SAYS 70 CM PETITION FILLED WITH MISINFORMATION

Still in the U-K, an electronic petition to Great Britain's Prime Minister's office titled "70 cmsband", has generated what is being described by the Radio Society of Great Britain as a "lemming like" response from the U-K amateur radio community. And from the society's public response, the petition also seems to have more than just annoyed the political leaders at the RSGB.

According to a notice posted at the Radio Society of Great Britain's website, the petition which originated just before the recent Easter break and has no foundation in truth. While the text of the petition could not be found on the web, it appears to have been derogatory in some way toward the RSGB. This because in its own posting the U-K national society asserts that it currently enjoys a good working relationship in negotiations with both telecommunications regulator Ofcom and the Ministry of Defense in regard to the 70 centimeter and other shared bands.

This RSGB says that the type of dis-information as that contained in the mysterious petition could undermine the relationship between the society and government policy makers. It also strongly advised all U-K hams to check the facts with the society before adding their name to such petitions.

And less we forget, the encyclopedia describes a lemming as a mouse-like

rodent living in arctic or northern regions. The Norway lemming is the best known because of its spectacular periodic swarming that sometimes leads the migrating rodents to jump from cliffs into bodies of water as they migrate. (Adapted from GB2RS story)

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RESTRUCTURING: US HAM POPULATION SHOWS MODERATE GROWTH

Some moderately good news regarding growth in numbers of FCC licensed radio amateurs. In his latest posting of license statistics to QRZ dot com, George Mc Couch, K3UD, says that it looks like overall Amateur Radio Service numbers have increased by 912 from January through March 2008.

According to George, the Technician and Technician Plus category had large increases while General had small increases. As expected. Novice and Advanced declined.

According to George, it appears as if the Technician license is still the most popular entry to the hobby for newcomers, making good gains over the last 2 quarters. Also, the movement to upgrade to Extra class is continuing. On the downside, it seems like the large movement from hams upgrading to General after the last round of restructuring has slowed to trickle over the last 6 months.

The bottom line. George says that this is the largest quarterly increase he has seen in a long time. You can read the good numbers on the news pages at www dot qrz dot com under the title Amateur Radio Growth in the 1st Quarter 2008: A look at the numbers. And our thanks to George Mc Couch, K3UD, for his ongoing volunteer effort to keep the ham radio public so well informed.

A direct link to article: http://forums.qrz.com/showthread.php?t7889
(K3UD via QRZ.com)

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BREAK 1

 From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the KA9EKG Repeater serving the Amateur Radio community of Delavan, Wisconsin.

(5 sec pause here)

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RESCUE RADIO: HAM RADIO TO THE RESCUE WHERE CELLPHONES DON'T WORK

Ham radio has once again proven it can provide emergency communications to the outside world when cellphones can't. Amateur Radio Newsline's Don Carlson, KQ6FM, is in Reno with more:

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In the most recent instance KSL television reported on March 28th that a driver passing through Utah's remote Logan Canyon lost control of her truck in the snow. The vehicle fell more than 100 feet over a cliff. Two of her three passengers were thrown out.

Other drivers stopped to help, but with no cell phone coverage in the isolated area, it was at least a 30 minute drive to make a phone call. But Eldon Kearl, K7OGM, of Fish Haven, Idaho, had a communications system that could call for assistance out of the remote canyon area.

Using his portable ham gear, Kearl contacted Roger Ellis, KE7THE, of Logan, Utah. Ellis, who says he's still new to Amateur Radio says that he was able to relay information to the 911 emergency response dispatchers. A half hour later, help was on the scene.

Late word is that everyone survived the crash with only minor injuries. The Utah Highway Patrol says if not for Kearl and Ellis getting help to the scene so quickly, those injuries could have become a lot worse.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Don Carlson, KQ6FM, in Reno.

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You can see the entire KSL report that includes interviews with both K7OGM and KE7THE at www.ksl.com/index.php?nid8&sid)60552# (N9MSM)

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ENFORCEMENT: UK COMPONENT SALES TO PIRATE BROADCASTERS BRINGS HEAVY FINE

Turning to enforcement news, word that selling electronic parts that might wind up being used for illegal purposes can get you in trouble in the United Kingdom. Witness the case of two directors of a U-K radio parts supplier who recently pleaded guilty of supplying gear to what we in the U-S-A call pirate broadcasters.

The pleas were recently entered in Croydon Magistrates Court by the Broadcast Warehouse, which is a Croydon area radio and component supplier. According to a report in the London Register, the firm pleaded guilty to the charges after Broadcast Warehouse components were found in transmitters seized by U-K telecommunications regulator Ofcom from unlicensed stations.

The paper says that the company and the directors were each fined ï¿½10,000. An additional ï¿½90,000 was also assessed in court fees. The full
story is on-line at
www.theregister.co.uk/2008/03/28/ofcom_broadcast_warehouse/ (Southgate)

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ENFORCEMENT: UNLICENSED STATION OPERATOR FINED $17000

The Federal Communications Commission has issued a o$17,000 monetary forfeiture to Craig Watkins for operating an unlicensed radio transmitter

on the frequency 106.3 MHz in Bronx, NY and willfully violating the Communications Act by refusing an inspection of the station. Amateur Radio Newsline's Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, has the details:

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On March 7, 2007, the FCC New York Office received a complaint from an engineer representing FM station WFAF, which operates on 106.3 MHz in Mt. Kisco, NY. The engineer reported that an illegal broadcast station operating on 106.3 MHz in Bronx, NY was causing interference to WFAF.

Three days later FCC Commission agents, using a mobile direction finding vehicle, monitored 106.3 MHz. The agents observed a broadcast on 106.3 and identified the source of the transmissions as an FM broadcasting antenna on a roof on East 229th Street in the Bronx..

Commission agents then conducted an investigation on the roof and observed an FM broadcast antenna mounted to the chimney of the building that was connected to a coaxial cable leading into a window of an upstairs apartment. The agents then knocked on the door to the upstairs apartment of the two-family house. When the man who answered the door was asked about the radio station, he stated that he was a visitor and that he knew nothing about the radio station. When agents asked him to turn off the transmitter, he did so. The man also advised the agents that the apartment's resident was not at home.

While speaking to the man at the upstairs apartment door, the agents were approached by the building owner. The agents advised the owner that an unauthorized radio station was being operated by someone in the upstairs apartment. He phoned the resident, Craig Watkins, and asked him to return to the residence. When Watkins arrived, the agents questioned him about the radio station and he admitted that there was radio equipment in his apartment, but he stated that no radio station existed. Watkins refused to allow the agents to inspect the equipment. The agents issued Watkins a Notice of Unlicensed Radio Operation for operating an unlicensed radio station on 106.3 MHz and for refusing to allow inspection of the radio equipment. After returning to the vehicle, the agents monitored 106.3 MHz and noted that the station was off the air.

But it did not stay off. On March 14th, a Commission agent, observed a radio broadcast on 106.3 MHz and identified the source of the transmissions as an FM broadcasting antenna on the roof of the same East 229th Street building. The agent took field strength measurements and determined that the signals being broadcast exceeded the limits for operation under Part 15 of the Rules and therefore required a license. So on July 27th the Commission's New York Field Office issued a Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture in the amount of $17,000 to Watkins for operating an unlicensed radio transmitter and refusing to allow an inspection of the radio station equipment..

Watkins filed a response to the NAL on August 25, 2007. In his response, Watkins did not deny that there was radio station equipment in his apartment and he did not claim that the equipment was there without his permission. He did however claim that he did not know anything about the operation of a radio station. He indicated that he questioned his

brother-in-law and his brother-in-law's friends about the radio station equipment and the antenna on the roof, but he was not able to obtain any information from them. Watkins did not address his refusal to allow the agents to inspect the equipment.

In affirming the fine, the FCC says that Watkins was identified by the building owner as the resident of the upstairs apartment and in his response to the Notice of Apparent Liability, Watkins states that he does resides at that address. Although Watkins does not admit to operating the radio station, he confirmed that there is radio station equipment in his apartment. Watkins does not state that such equipment was there without his permission. As a result, they found that Watkins provided services and facilities incidental to the transmission of communications by radio occurring on 106.3 MHz from his home.

The FCC says that it has previously held that liability for unlicensed operation may be assigned to any individual taking part in the operation of the unlicensed station, regardless of who else may be responsible for the operation. This is because Section 301 of the Communications Act says that no person shall use, or operate, radio transmission equipment without an FCC license.

Taken together, the FCC finds that Watkins's actions amounted to willful and repeated violations of the Communications Act and that the $17,000 fine is affirmed.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, in the newsroom in Los Angeles.

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Watkins was given the customary 30 days to pay or to file an appeal. (FCC)

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WITH THE FCC: FCC SEEKS ENGINEERING SCHOOL GRADS FOR EIT

The Federal Communications Commission says it is seeking applications from engineering school graduates with superior academic credentials and an interest in communications engineering. This, for its 2008 Engineer-in-Training Program.

The Engineer-in-Training Program helps the commission recruit new and recent engineering school graduates to the agency and the field of communications. Recent engineering grads and candidates for graduation this spring are invited to apply for openings in the program's 2008 class.

Additional information is available on the FCC's EIT Program page at www.fcc.gov/EITprogram, or by contacting the FCC's Human Resources Office at area code 202 -418-0130. You can also e-mail for more information to recruit@fcc.gov. (FCC)

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HAM HAPPENINGS: THE K0S STRANGE ANTENNA CHALLANGE

Now here's one that should catch the attention of a lot of you. Erik Weaver N0EW sent along a note to tell us about the upcoming K Zero-S Strange Antenna Challenge slated for Memorial Day weekend, May 24th to the 26th.

What is a strange antenna challenge you ask? According to Erik, its an event where antennas are not permitted to be constructed of wire or metal pipe. Rather, those taking part must use their imagination to design radiators that are untraditional. Erik says that past antennas have included such items as metal folding chairs, chicken wire, fences, ladders, and even a trampoline.

If this sound like a fun way to spend Memorial Day weekend, you can get more information on-line at www.n0ew.org/k0s/ (N0EW)

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HAM HAPPENINGS: THE WORLD WIDE ATV OPEN HOUSE

The A-T-V Newsletter is putting together a World Wide ATV Open House . In this case ATV means Amateur Television and it will be a virtual open house aimed at getting more members for Amateur Television groups and clubs while making all radio amateurs aware of ATV.

The Open House will run for 24 hours on a date somewhere between September and the first part of December yet to be finalized and will be open to all radio amateurs that want in on the fun. By taking advantage of the Voice over I P technology and the Internet and using streaming communications via Skype, Echolink, and the like, numerous virtual QSO can be made. For more information please e-mail world-wide-atv-repeater-network at hotmail dot com (N6IFU)

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THE SOCIAL SCENE: AN INVITE TO JOIN THE FLYING HAMS REMAILRT

If you are a ham licensed as a pilot, a student pilot or just interested in aviation, you might want to consider joining the Flying Hams User Group. Formed by Daniel Hileman, N9WX, in Peru, Indiana, the group currently meets only in cyberspace using a yahoogroups remailer. Topics discussed range from technical issues to flight training to discussions of aircraft and the social aspect of both hobbies. To join just send a blank e-mail to Flying_Hams-subscribe@yahoogroups.com (Flying Hams)

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THE SOCIAL SCENE: LSDXA HAM COM DX DINNER IN JUNE

The Texas-based Lone Star DX Association has announced that Eric Scace, K3NA, will be the keynote speaker for the organizations DX Dinner Banquet at HamCom 2008. Eric Scace was the co-leader of the recent record breaking VP6DX Ducie Island operation. His presentation is long awaited. HamCom is slated for June 13th and 14th at the Plano Center, north of Dallas. More information about the DX dinner and the convention is on line at www.hamcom.org (LSDXA)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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THE DIGITALIZATION OF HAM RADIO: NEW DVD ON DIGITAL VOICE MODES FROM ARVN

"Digital Voice for Amateur Radio" is a new DVD designed as a club meeting program to introduce hams to the various digital voice modes now coming to both the High Frequency and VHF bands.

Produced by well known documentary film maker Gary Pearce, KN4AQ, the 60 minute show highlights High Frequency systems such as those from AOR and WinDRM. It also delves into the emerging worlds of APCO P25 and D-Star that are in growing use in the VHF and UHF spectrum.

"Digital Voice for Amateur Radio" is being distributed by the North Carolina-based Amateur Radio Video Network. A free 8 minute preview along with pricing and ordering information is on-line at www.arvidnews.com. Questions go to Gary Pearce by e-mail to kn4aq at arvidnews dot com. (ARVIDNEWS)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: ASTRO HAMS TO BE TRAINED

An Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) training session has been planned for astronauts Bob Thirsk, VA3CSA, and Chris Hadfield, KC5RNJ. Hadfield is dual licensed as VA3OOG. The session will take place on Thursday, April 17. Thirsk is a scheduled crew member on Expedition 19 and Hadfield is his back-up. (ARISS)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: WINGS OVER THE ROCKIES AIR & SPACE MUSEUM ADOPTS HAM RADIO

Ham radio is an integral part of the Wings Over The Rockies Air and Space Museum. Amateur Radio, using the call K0WAR has a prominent place in the Denver, Colorado museum with working stations located in the Avionics Room as well as the Space Station module exhibit.

The museum is Denver's newest historical and educational facility, and is dedicated to education, science, mathematics, technology and the rich history of flight in the Rocky Mountain region. One of its primary missions is to teach the younger generation about the science of aviation and space travel.

With 165,000 square feet in a 1930's-era Air Force hangar, 30 aircraft and special exhibits including Amateur Radio, Wings Over The Rockies is not only Denver's first aerospace museum, it is also the official air and space museum of the State of Colorado. More information about the museum and the part played in it by ham radio is on line at wings.rmhcn.org (KB6CC)

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WORLDBEAT - BOSNIA: NEW CALL SIGNS ISSUED IN BOSNIA - HERTZEGOVENIA

Hitting the worldbeat, effective as of 23:00 U-T-C on March 21st, hams in Bosnia-Herzegovina were told to begin using their new E7 callsigns. Boris Knezovia, E73TW, says that the country's Communications Regulatory Agency has issued only two and three letter callsigns suffixes. Applications for one letter suffixes can be applied for starting April 14th and hopefully will be issued in late May. The International Telecommunications Union announced last August 8th that they replaced the callsign series prefix block of Bosnia-Herzegovina from T9 to E7. (Southgate)

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WORLDBEAT - SABLE ISLAND: MAGIC BAND DXPEDITION ANNOUNCED

If you operate on the Magic Band, listen up. A 6-meter DXpedition to Sable Island scheduled to take place from June 25th through July 7th. The Ohio Penn DX Newsletter reports that VE3IKV, K5AND and W3CMP will be active from the rare enclave using the callsign CY0X on both CW and SSB.

Their fixed location 6 meter station will be in grid square FN93. The group will also try to activate rare grid GN03 using the callsign CY0RA if there is a solid opening. For this they are totting along a portable station with a 5 element yagi. In both cases the operators will be transmitting on 50.117 MHz and requests that those they might make contact with not send their grid square as it consumes valuable time during a DX opening.

This CY0X operation will also operate on 20 meters and 40 meter CW and SSB but the High Frequency operation will take lower priority over the 6 meters. QSL's go via VE3IKV and there is more on this upcoming operation is on-line at www.cy0x.com (OPDX)

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RADIOSPORTS: 2007 FALL SPRINT SCORES NOW ON LINE

Jim Worsham, W4KXY, says that the results for the 2007 Fall Sprints, sponsored by the Southeastern VHF Society, are now available for viewing on line. Jim also says that all of the first, second and third place winners are invited to attend the Southeastern VHF Society conference in Orlando, Florida on April 25th and 26th to receive their award certificates at the Saturday night banquet. Information on attending the conference is available at www.svhfs.org. (W4KXY)

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DX

In DX, word that ON5AX and ON3AX continue to be active from the Pacific locations on their three month tour. Their next stop is Australia with both operating portable V-K-4 through April 7th. QSL direct to ON5AX or ON3AX.

And here's one that hams all along the North American East coast with 4 meter receive capability might want to listen out for. Sunday 6th April between 09.00 and 12.00 UTC sees the RSGB 70MHz contest. All modes are permitted and the exchange is the normal R-S-T, serial number and locator. While hams this aide of the Atlantic cannot transmit on 70 MHz, they can listen in and use the contest as a propagation study of the 4 meter band.

Thanks to good weather conditions, the ship SA Agulhas has reached Marion Island and Petrus Kritzinger, ZS8T, is now there for at least 12 months. According to announced plans, the science work for the first few weeks will take precedence and ZS8T's activity won't start earlier than the
end of April. This means any station using that call will be a pirate. Once operations are ready to start, an announcement will be made on the ZS8T.net website.

Lastly the 9-X-zero-R operation from Rwanda is now QRT. During the operation The multi-national DXpedition team made just under 63,000k QSO's. Of these about 31,000 of these were on CW, 26,000 on SSB and 4,900 on RTTY. If you worked this one, QSL via EA5RM.

Above from various DX news sources

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RESULTS OF AR NEWSLINE POLL RESULTS: SHOULD D-STAR REPEATERS OPERATE ONLY IN REPEATER SUBBANDS?

Finally this week, the answer to the survey question that asked if D-Star digital voice repeaters be restricted to operate in the same designated subbands as traditional analog FM. The results were not at all surprising.

83% of those responding wanting D-Star repeaters to be restricted to existing repeater subbands. 17% said its OK for them to operate wherever in a given band that the owner might desire. These results seem to echo what's being read on various VHF and UHF remailers and public posting websites.

There is one caveat to this survey. Of the tens of thousands of you out there with web access, only 324 of you took the time to vote in this one. We have no idea if this means a lack of interest in the mode or that you are not that concerned about band planning. We do thank those of you who took the time to go to www.arnewsline.org to do so. (ARNewsline(tm))

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THAT FINAL ITEM - APRIL 2008 POLL: GAS PRICES VS. HAMFESTS

Now, we are switching gears for our next on-line survey. According to the Department of Energy, the national average retail price of a gallon of regular grade gasoline now about $3.40. The DoE has also long been hinting that the pre-tax cost could soon exceed $4 a gallon or more. Now, add on federal, state and even local taxes and a gallon could easily hit $4.50. With this in mind, we would like to know how high will the pump price of a gallon of gasoline have to go to keep you from driving that 50 or 60 mile round trip to your favorite hamfest of convention?

Taking part in this survey is easy. Just take your web browser over to www.arnewsline.org. Then scroll down the page until you see the word polls on the left hand side. Then just click on the dollar amount that's closest to the maximum you would bay for a gallon of gas before leaving the car in your driveway and bypassing this years event. The up to the minute results will be displayed once you have cast your vote.

We will leave this survey on-line through the end of April. Again, that's www.arnewsline.org on the left side of the page under the word polls to make your opinion known on this one. (ARNewsline(tm))

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's W-I-A News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

Before we go we want to remind you that the nominating period for the 2008 Amateur Radio Newsline Young Ham of the Year is now open. Any licensed radio amateur age 18 or younger residing in the United States or Canada is eligible for the award. Full details and both downloadable and on-line nominating forms are in cyberspace at www dot YHOTY dot org.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jeff Clark, K8JAC, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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